**Voice of the Founders**

Following the Constitutional Convention, the founders wrote a series of letters and essays to convince their fellow Americans to support ratification of the Constitution. Here is a selection of some highlights from these documents. Choose (2) of these quotes to use in your poster.

**Benjamin Franklin, “Rising Sun Speech,” September 17, 1787**

“I doubt too whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better Constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men, all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. From such an assembly can a perfect production be expected? It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does”

“Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure, that it is not the best.”

“I hope therefore that for our own sakes as a part of the people, and for the sake of posterity, we shall act heartily and unanimously in recommending this Constitution”

**George Washington, “letter to Patrick Henry,” September 24, 1787**

“I wish the Constitution which is offered had been made more perfect, but I sincerely believe it is the best that could be obtained at this time; and, as a Constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter, the adoption of it under the present circumstances of the Union is in my opinion desirable.”

“if nothing had been agreed on by that body, anarchy would soon have ensued”

**James Madison, “letter to Thomas Jefferson,” October 24, 1787**

“it is impossible to consider the degree of concord which ultimately prevailed as less than a miracle…”

“The great desideratum in Government is, so to modify the sovereignty as that it may be sufficiently neutral between different parts of the Society to controul one part from invading the rights of another, and at the same time sufficiently controuled itself, from setting up an interest adverse to that of the entire Society”

“In the extended Republic of the United States, The General Government would hold a pretty even balance between the parties of particular States, and be at the same time sufficiently restrained by its dependence on the community, from betraying its general interests.”

**Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No.1,” October 27, 1787**

“The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed”

“Yes, my Countrymen, I own to you that after having given it an attentive consideration, I am clearly of opinion it is your interest to adopt it. I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty, your dignity, and your happiness.”

“its adoption will afford to the preservation of (republican) government, to liberty and to property.”

**George Washington, “letter to Bushrod Washington,” November 10, 1787**

“The separate interests, as far as it is practicable, must be consolidated”

“If then the Union of the whole is a desirable object, the componant parts must yield a little in order to accomplish it.”

“The warmest friends and the best supporters the Constitution has, do not contend that it is free from imperfections; but they found them unavoidable and are sensible, if evil is likely to arise there from, the remedy must come hereafter; for in the present moment, it is not to be obtained; and, as there is a Constitutional door open for it, I think the People (for it is with them to Judge) can as they will have the advantage of experience on their Side, decide with as much propriety on the alterations and amendments which are necessary [as] ourselves. I do not think we are more inspired, have more wisdom, or possess more virtue, than those who will come after us.”

“The power under the Constitution will always be in the People. It is entrusted for certain defined purposes, and for a certain limited period, to representatives of their own chusing”

“No man is a warmer advocate for proper restraints and wholesome checks in every department of government than I am”

**Thomas Jefferson, “letter to James Madison,” December 20, 1787**

“I like the organization of the government into Legislative, Judiciary & Executive . I like the power given the Legislature to levy taxes, and for that reason solely approve of the greater house being chosen by the people directly.”

“I am captivated by the compromise of the opposite claims of the great & little states, of the latter to equal, and the former to proportional influence. I am much pleased too with the substitution of the method of voting by persons, instead of that of voting by states”

“a bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth”

“it is my principle that the will of the majority should always prevail. If they approve the proposed Convention in all it’s parts, I shall concur in it cheerfully”

“I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries”

**Thomas Jefferson, “letter to James Madison,” July 31, 1788**

**“**I sincerely rejoice at the acceptance of our new constitution by nine States. It is a good canvas, on which some strokes only want retouching.”